



Historic First Strike Of Nation's Most Beautiful Coin

November 24, 2008

United States Mint at West Point Begins Producing 2009 Ultra High Relief Double Eagle Gold Coin

WEST POINT, N.Y. — The United States Mint at West Point invited officials from numismatic organizations and reporters to witness the historic first production strike of the highly anticipated 2009 Ultra High Relief Double Eagle Gold Coin today. The new 24-karat (.9999 pure) gold coin is a modern version of what many call the most beautiful gold piece ever created—Augustus Saint-Gaudens' 1907 Double Eagle. The United States Mint will begin taking orders for the new collectible gold coin early next year.

United States Mint Director Ed Moy struck the first coin, which will be transferred to the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of American History. He struck a second coin as an addition to the United States Mint's heritage assets.

"This gold ultra high relief coin, evoking Augustus Saint-Gaudens' 1907 Double Eagle with Liberty striding forward, is one of the world's most beautiful coins," Director Moy told the crowd. "The United States Mint is proud to render the vision of President Theodore Roosevelt and Augustus Saint-Gaudens in a way that honors our past and raises the bar for the future. One hundred years from now, I believe the 2009 Ultra High Relief Double Eagle Gold Coin will be remembered as the birth of the greatest American century in coin-making history."

In the early 1900s, President Roosevelt called for a "renaissance" in American coinage. He thought the coins of that era were unattractive and wanted them to embody the national identity of the United States and its preeminence on the world stage. Roosevelt chose Augustus Saint-Gaudens to redesign America's coins. Saint-Gaudens was a renowned sculptor and artist who shared the President's vision for expressing America's national identity visually through art. However, despite Saint-Gaudens' masterful design for a \$20 gold piece with ultra high relief, it could not be mass produced using the technology of that era.

Now, aided by advancements in technology, the United States Mint can produce, in quantity, the ultra high relief coin envisioned, but never fully realized, by Roosevelt and Saint-Gaudens in 1907. Through 21st century technology, original Saint-Gaudens coin plasters were digitally mapped by the United States Mint. The Saint-Gaudens sculpture – in ultra high relief – has been updated to reflect the year 2009; four stars have been added to represent the current 50 states; and the inscription IN GOD WE TRUST, which was not on the 1907 version, will be on the reverse (tails side) of the coin. Additionally, a small border was added for a more consistent edge. The 2009 coin will be made of 24-karat gold. The new 2009 Ultra High Relief Double Eagle Gold Coin will have the nominal denomination of \$20.

The sales price for the coin has not been determined; it will depend, in part, on prevailing world gold prices. It will be available early next year via the United States Mint's Web Site at www.usmint.gov or by phone at 1-800-USA-MINT.

To download an image of the 2009 Ultra High Relief Double Eagle Gold Coin, go to: </learn/coin-and-medal-programs/american-eagle>

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Press Inquiries: Office of Corporate Communications (202) 354-7222
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